



Bridging Research To Client Results

Debra B. Natenshon



Debra is a [recognized expert and influential social sector thought leader](#) who excels at guiding clients on their journey to high performance. As a trusted advisor, adaptive consultant, and motivational speaker, she successfully bridges strategy with evidence-based research, resulting in [highly effective client engagements](#) and [well-regarded keynotes and workshops](#). Through her social purpose consultancy, [DBN & Associates, L3C](#), Debra demonstrates integrity and innovation in partnership with motivated leaders to advance organizational and programmatic results. Her goal: to define social change based on verifiable client results, rather than on well-intentioned activities.

For the ten years prior to founding DBN & Associates, Debra served as CEO of The Center for What Works, a national nonprofit organization focused on outcome management research, training and consulting. She published [ground-breaking research](#) on outcome frameworks, including the first [nonprofit taxonomy of outcomes](#) with the Urban Institute, launched an eLearning course with Cisco Systems Foundation, and designed nonprofit and foundation effectiveness toolkits with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

Debra focuses on continuous improvement for a range of human service providers, umbrella organizations, funders and capacity-builders. She uses a systems approach, connecting processes and people to efficiently determine effective, nuanced pathways. In addition to individual organizations, Debra facilitates cohorts in developing shared outcome frameworks.

Debra is a [Leap Ambassador](#), an international brain trust of leaders developing resources to define and support high performance organizations. She co-authored the paper, [Small but Mighty](#) to guide small nonprofits and collaboratively published [The Performance Imperative](#) framework and the [Performance Practice](#) self-assessment tool. Debra is also credited with key inputs into numerous products and publications for leading sector-wide organizations.

In 2004, Debra founded the Chicago professional chapter of [Net Impact](#), a global network of leaders changing the world through business. Under her leadership, the Chicago chapter won Professional Chapter of the Year. Debra served on Net Impact's membership committee to determine global strategy, and she continues to mentor emerging leaders. In a volunteer role, she currently serves on the Program and Advocacy Committee for [New Moms](#).

Debra started her career in the private sector for [IOR Global Services](#), a cross-cultural training and consulting firm, where she designed and streamlined business processes for several Fortune 100 corporate clients. She also helped launch a technology company in the late 90s, where she successfully implemented their first corporate client in over 20 countries.

Debra earned a Master of Science in Organizational Management, with a focus on the social sector. She has studied, lived and worked in England, Japan, India, Israel, and Argentina, and she integrates her evolving knowledge of the world to learn, leverage and contribute. Debra is based in Chicago and gains balance and joy from her husband and three sons.